

Scrutiny of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with Part 3 of the Police and Justice Act 2006, local authorities have the power to scrutinise the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in their area (in North Lincolnshire this is the Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership) and make reports and recommendations to the Local Authority and the partnership. In North Lincolnshire, this is undertaken by the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel, which has been designated the “Crime and Disorder Committee” under Paragraph 1, Section 19 of Part 3 of the Act.
- 1.2 This Protocol has been produced between North Lincolnshire Council, The Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel and the respective partners comprising the North Lincolnshire Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership. The publication of Regulations and good working practice has shaped this Protocol which may be revised by agreement between all the interested parties in order to continually improve the scrutiny process.

2. Principles Of Scrutiny Operation

- 2.1 Scrutiny in North Lincolnshire is positive, objective and constructive. It acknowledges good practice and recommends improvements where it feels that these would be of benefit. Scrutiny concentrates on service outcomes and seeks to add value to each service that it considers.
- 2.2 Community safety and freedom from crime and disorder for the people of North Lincolnshire is dependant upon many factors including the services provided in partnership by partners in the Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership. This shared responsibility will be acknowledged by scrutiny and will feature in scrutiny reviews.
- 2.3 Scrutiny of the reduction of crime and disorder will only be truly successful if key organisations work and co-operate together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust with an understanding and commitment to its aims.
- 2.4 The key organisations involved in scrutiny of crime and disorder must be willing to share information, knowledge and reports which relate to the delivery and success of services in North Lincolnshire and carry out duties that would be reasonably expected of them to enable crime and disorder scrutiny to be successfully undertaken.
- 2.5 At all times both officers and members of the organisations involved in crime and disorder scrutiny, representatives and members of the public will be treated with respect and courtesy. Matters of confidentiality will be treated with respect.
- 2.6 Crime and disorder scrutiny will be open and transparent. Any person involved in crime and disorder scrutiny will always declare any personal or other pecuniary interest that they have either in a scrutiny exercise or during a meeting of the scrutiny panel in accordance with the Code of Conduct relating to standards of conduct and ethics.

- 2.7 The North Lincolnshire Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel, whilst working in partnership, is independent of the respective partners comprising the North Lincolnshire Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership.
- 2.8 Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder will try to maximise the involvement of the community and will work with other agencies representing the public.
- 2.9 Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder will be focused on improving services and service provision for the people of North Lincolnshire and will concentrate on outputs that are intended to help improve community safety and reduce the fear of crime in North Lincolnshire.

3. The North Lincolnshire Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel

- 3.1 All dates and times of meetings of the Scrutiny Panel, agendas, minutes and reports will be circulated to members and the North Lincolnshire Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 or subsequent legislation.
- 3.2 The North Lincolnshire Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership will be consulted on Annual Work Programmes and informed in advance of scrutiny exercises that the Scrutiny Panel is intending to undertake. They will also be informed of the scope of all scrutiny exercises and will be given adequate notice of invitations to attend meetings of Scrutiny Panels and any required information.
- 3.3 The North Lincolnshire Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership will be consulted on any draft reports before they are published. Final reports will be presented to North Lincolnshire Council, the North Lincolnshire Safer Neighbourhoods Strategy Board, be published on the Council's website and circulated in accordance with the regulations on scrutiny of crime and disorder.
- 3.4 Crime and disorder scrutiny is not to be used as a complaints procedure. Case studies may however be used as part of supporting information for scrutiny exercises.
- 3.5 The North Lincolnshire Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership will be informed of any press releases relating to crime and disorder scrutiny although the council Public Relations Department may speak to the press in advance of meeting to brief them about forthcoming Scrutiny Panel meetings.
- 3.6 The Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel will at all times comply with the Constitution of North Lincolnshire Council.

4. North Lincolnshire Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership

- 4.1 The North Lincolnshire Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership will work in partnership with the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel to provide objective and effective scrutiny of crime and disorder in North Lincolnshire.

- 4.2 The Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership will provide information relating to the planning and operation of crime and disorder reduction activities and strategies that is required by the Scrutiny Panel so that it can undertake its required scrutiny reviews. This excludes information reasonably likely to prejudice legal proceedings or current or future operations of the responsible authorities, whether acting together or individually, or of the co-operating persons or bodies.
- 4.3 Information provided to the Scrutiny Panel shall be depersonalised unless the identification of an individual is necessary or appropriate in order to enable the Scrutiny Panel to properly exercise its powers (not withstanding the paragraph above).
- 4.4 The Safer Neighbourhoods Partners will provide the Scrutiny Panel with such information within 20 working days of the receipt of the request, in line with Freedom of Information legislation. The partners will endeavour to provide such information as soon as it is practicable.
- 4.5 The North Lincolnshire Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership will respond to crime and disorder scrutiny reviews by written, considered response as soon as practicable and otherwise within a maximum of twelve weeks. The Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership will provide acknowledgement of the report and an initial response within four weeks of the presentation of the report, if a considered response is not ready at that time.
- 4.6 A separate protocol and procedure will be agreed to cover references to the Scrutiny Panel from the elected members via the Councillor Call for Action.
- 4.7 The Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership will be consulted by the Scrutiny Panel to compile annual work programmes for crime and disorder scrutiny.
- 4.8 The Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership will nominate a main contact person for each crime and disorder scrutiny exercise and maintain regular contact with the Scrutiny Panel, attending in person when invited.
- 4.9 The Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership will ensure that staff members attending Scrutiny Panel meetings are able to answer questions openly and are given appropriate support by their line managers.
- 4.10 The Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership will be proactive and suggest potential topics and items of interest for inclusion on the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel's work programme.
- 4.11 The Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership will contribute where appropriate to other cross-cutting reviews that have incidental impact on Crime and Disorder matters.
- 4.12 The Humberside Police Authority will be fully engaged in the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel where crime and disorder matters are being considered.

